



Tapu!tea

...ina ia manino le folauga.

Tuesday
January 9,
2007

OFFICIAL AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Vol. II, No. 1

Governor Togiola informs public of impending travel for health purposes

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono was admitted to LBJ Medical Center in Faga’alu on Wednesday, January 3, 2007 after experiencing excruciating pain from a kidney stone.

The following is the official statement from the Office of the Governor:

On Tuesday morning, January 2nd, Governor Togiola experienced severe pain on the right side of his lower back and went to LBJ Hospital. While there, X-rays, CT scans and ultrasound tests confirmed the presence of a good size stone in the right kidney.

Dr. Saleapaga recommended that the Governor seek immediate medical attention off island. Governor Togiola requested to remain on island until after the Fono opening on Monday. However, Dr. Saleapaga insisted on immediate travel for treatment in Honolulu.

After a few hours of treatment in order to relieve pain and provide comfort, Governor Togiola went home to Maugaoali’i and returned to work on the plantation. The Governor even attended Samoa Bowl IV on Tuesday evening.

On Wednesday morning on the way to work, Governor Togiola, again, felt the same pain and returned to the hospital, where he was admitted for observation as well as for severe discomfort. Dr. Saleapaga said it was important that the Governor travel on the next available flight to avoid any damage to the kidney.

Governor Togiola today authorized the release of information on his condition at LBJ Medical Center in Faga’alu.

The Governor will travel tonight to Honolulu with his wife – Mary, and an LBJ physician to Straub Hospital. Despite his discomfort, the Governor is in high spirits, issuing the following comments:

“I wish to inform the Territory that I am following doctors’ recommendations to report to Honolulu for treatment of the kidney stone. It is not life threatening and I want everyone to know that even governors have bad days. We thank the people for their concerns and well wishes and ask everyone not to worry. Thank God it is nothing more serious. I hope to return home after treatment in a week.

At this time I wish to extend my sincere congratulations to the returning President and the new Speaker of the Fono and I look forward to working with them and all the members of the 30th Legislature.

In the meantime, Lieutenant Governor Ipulasi Aitofele Sunia will assume responsibilities and management of all government affairs. I have the utmost confidence in his experience and capabilities to manage our government in good working order.”

Governor Togiola appoints Dr. Claire Poumele as new DOE director

(UTULEI) - Governor Togiola Tulafono announced Thursday, January 4, 2007, the appointment of Dr. Claire Poumele as the new Director of Education to replace Malaetele Dr. Lui Tuitele who resigned on December 8th.

In a General Memorandum issued before departing the Territory for Honolulu on Thursday night, Governor Togiola said Dr. Poumele has served for thirty years with the American Samoa Government, in several managerial and instructional capacities. The last six of those years have been spent as Deputy Director of the Department of Education.

Dr. Poumele holds credentials from Brigham Young University, University of Portland and the State of Oregon.

“I have the utmost confidence in the abilities of Dr. poumele and request that you extgend to her your fullest support and cooperation,” said Governor Togiola.

HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On January 1, 1901, the first "Ordinance to regulate the assessment and collection of native taxes" took effect at the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila. The Commandant, Commander Benjamin Franklin Tilley, USN, had issued this ordinance "at the request of the natives in district meetings."

On January 1, 1921, American Samoa's Chief Medical Officer, Lieutenant Commander H.L. Dollard, issued his "Sanitary Instructions for the People of American Samoa." One copy was given to each family, and "the village chief was held responsible for the enforcement of the instructions."

On January 1, 1924, Captain Edward Stanley Kellogg, Governor of American Samoa, issued his "Regulation No. 2: A REGULATION To prohibit the "death feast" in the Manu'a group of islands." This edict forbade the Samoan customs known as *lau'ava* and *aitagi*, and provided "a fine not exceeding \$25 in amount or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 60 days, with or without hard labor, or both, such fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court."

On January 1, 1926, American Samoa was devastated by a hurricane. Olosega, in the Manu'a Islands, suffered the most. The Navy Department gave the Territory 50 tons of rice, 10 tons of salmon and 15 tons of biscuits.

On January 1, 1962, Western Samoa became the first independent state in the tropical South Pacific, and also the world's first independent "micro-state." Malietoa Tanumafili II and Tupua Tamasese Mea'ole were joint Heads of State for life. Mata'afa Faumuina Fiaame Mulinu'u II was Western Samoa's first Prime Minister.

On January 2, 1937, American Samoa's Governor, Captain MacGillivray Milne, informed the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William Daniel Leahy, that the members of the Fita Fita Guard were "generally recognized as the aristocrats of American Samoa. As long as the Navy Department and the Commandant of this station expect no more of the Fita Fitas than did Commandant Tilley, the interests of the United States Government will be well served."

On January 2, 1978, Hyrum Rex Lee finished his term as American Samoa's last appointed civil governor.

On January 2, 1989, Peter Tali Coleman began his fourth gubernatorial term (the third as an elected governor). Galea'i Poumele was inaugurated as American Samoa's third elected lieutenant governor.

On January 3, 1887, Mr. John E. Bush, Hawaiian King Kalakaua's "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of Samoa," arrived in Apia with his delegation. Bush drank kava with King Malietoa Laupepa, and presented him with the "Grand Cross of the Order of Oceania." Both parties bound themselves "to enter into a political confederation," subject to existing treaty obligations. The "convention" was signed on February 17, 1887.

On January 3, 1959, the American Samoa Government's Sixth Legislature held its first session. Senator Ropati Sotoa of Ta'u County was re-elected President of the Senate, and Representative A.P. Lauvao (who on January 3, 1985 would become Governor A.P. Lutali) was re-elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

On January 3, 1959, the American Samoa Government's Sixth Legislature held its first session. Senator Ropati Sotoa of Ta'u County was re-elected President of the Senate, and Representative A.P. Lauvao (who on January 3, 1985 would become Governor A.P. Lutali) was re-elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives.

On January 3, 1985, A.P. Lutali and Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin began their first term as American Samoa's second elected Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

On January 3, 1997, Tauese Pita Fiti Sunia and Togiola Talalelei Tulafono were inaugurated as American Samoa's third elected governor and fifth elected lieutenant governor. Tauese became the only elected governor who previously served as a cabinet member (Director of Education, January 3, 1985-January 2, 1989) and Lieutenant Governor (January 3, 1993-January 3, 1997).

On January 4, 1993, A.P. Lutali began his second term as American Samoa's second elected Governor, with Tauese P. F. Sunia taking office as the Territory's fourth elected Lieutenant Governor.

On January 6, 1997, Tropical Storm "Evan" began to develop south of Samoa. During the next seven days, Evan followed a clockwise course from south-southwest-west-northwest-north. Maximum wind speeds during Evan's stay reached 67 mph. Rains were heavy, and flooding was widespread.

Governor Togiola procedure at Straub a success, "feeling fine"

(UTULEI) – Acting Governor Ipulasi Aitofele Sunia announced Sunday, January 7th, that Governor Togiola Tulafono successfully underwent a 90-minute procedure to remove a kidney stone at Straub Hospital in Honolulu on Saturday.

The following is the official statement from Acting Governor Ipulasi:

"I am happy to announce that the American Samoa office in Honolulu reports that Governor Togiola Tulafono has successfully completed treatment at Straub Hospital for a kidney stone.

Governor Togiola on Friday had a series of tests at Straub in preparation for the treatment. On Saturday morning at 7:30 he entered the operating room for procedure that lasted an hour and a half. After recovery from the procedure, the Governor was discharged in the afternoon. He is feeling fine and relieved of the excruciating pain of a kidney stone.

Governor Togiola expresses sincere thanks to the people for all the best wishes and prayers. He is looking forward to returning home and back to work when he completes follow-up appointments with the doctors this week," said Acting Governor Ipulasi.

ASG RADIO PROGRAM

With:

Governor Togiola Tulafono

Saturdays @ 7a.m.

On: Showers of Blessings - FM 104.7

Call 699-8123 or 699-8124

SHARE IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES

with our ASG workforce

as well as the citizens of American Samoa.

Email your articles, announcements, pictures or other information to:

tapuitea@amsamoa.gov.as

Or Contact:

Harry Stevens @733-1694 or Vince Iuli @ 733-1041

Governor Togiola fills fifth slot at Land Commission with Mr. Vaivao Etelagi

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono has appointed Mr. Vaivao Etelagi, former President of the Development Bank of American Samoa, as the fifth member of the Land Commission.

In a General Memorandum, Governor Togiola Tulafono said as former president of the Development Bank, Mr. Etelagi has vast experience in real estate transactions, both in reviewing and confirming statutory compliance for leases and conveyances, as well as in the area of financing.

“I am confident in Mr. Etelagi’s abilities to carry out the statutory duties attendant with the appointment. Please extend to him your customary courtesy and support,” said Governor Togiola.

ASCC SEEDS Club Conducts Second Island Ecology Comparison Field Excursion

By ASCC Staff

18 students in the SEEDS (Strategies for Ecology Education, Development and Sustainability) Club at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) returned to Tutuila last week after spending five days in Savai’i conducting geology and ecology research. Last semester, the SEEDS Club conducted their initial research comparing the islands of Upolu and Tutuila. The Ecological Society of America was so pleased with their findings that the group received a small grant to further the study to include the island of Savai’i. These dedicated students fundraised by hosting the first “Big Man on Campus” competition this past semester, and holding several bake sales to obtain the additional funds needed to cover the cost of the trip.

Savai’i, a high volcanic shield island of 1717 sq. km, offers 192.4 km of shoreline and a great range of ecology and geology interests, from volcanic craters and lava tubes, rain forest canopy walks, blowholes, mangrove wetlands and some lovely beaches and coral reefs. In comparison, Upolu has 403 km of coastline with narrow coastal plains with volcanic, rocky, rugged mountains in interior, as opposed to Tutuila’s 116 km of shoreline with rugged peaks and limited coastal plains.

The ASCC students stopped first at the lava fields at Saleaula on the north-east coast. Sitting upon a fault along two tectonic plates (Pacific and Australian), volcanic activity is estimated to occur every 150 years or so. The last activity took place between 1905 and 1911, when the crater at Mt. Matavanu formed, spilling millions of tons of lava over the fertile lands of the north-east coast and into the lagoon while burying the village of Saleaula. Radiant Fuimaono, a Liberal Arts Major, remarked, “This excursion is an eye-opening experience. To see the different types of lava and learn about how our islands are formed was very exciting for me.”

The group then traveled to Manase, where they conducted a beach and fish survey and coral reef assessment. They continued on to Falealupo Rainforest Preserve, a natural low lying tropical forest as well as the core site of an environmental project aimed to persuade local villagers to preserve the natural forest. A huge canopy walkway has been built to help fund the reserve and give the villagers an alternative source of income. Liberal Arts major Saneterini Amosa marveled, “The canopy walk was amazing and scary at the same time. When you are up there you can see the island for its natural beauty until you look down, then you realize how far up you are.” The Reserve is also home to an unusually shaped crack in the lava which is held to be the footprint of a famous giant, *Mosō*. After seeing the “footprint,” the group traveled the coast around Cape Mulinu'u, where legend has it that the souls of the dead pass into the underworld.

Stopping next at the village of Satuiatua, the group conducted a second beach and fish survey, as well as another coral reef assessment. The group ended their trip with a visit to the Afu’aau waterfalls, where the ancient Pulemelei Mound stands. The largest archaeological site in Polynesia, this mound stands at more than 60 metres in length and 15 meters in height. Research continues to determine who built it and why.

(Continued on page 4)

ASCC SEEDS Club *(continued from page 3)*

One ancient belief holds that the mound marks the original landing site of the first Polynesians to settle the Pacific. It may also have been an astrological monument to the successful seafaring journeys of these ancient people. Miracle Tali, a Marine Science major, summed up the experience: "This trip was very educational. We not only learned about the environment, but about the history of our culture. Seeing the footprint and the cape where the spirits depart was very moving."

Based on their observations, the students made some conclusions about the state of Savai'i's environment. Logging and subsistence agriculture have made major impacts to Savai'i's ecosystem, which consists of lowland and mountain rain forests; cloud forest with many endemics; scrub and grasslands on recent lava flows and uplands; crater marshes; swamp forest; mangroves, rocky shores, and reefs along some of the coasts. Subsistence agriculture and plantations are located in most coastal areas, and extensive logging is destroying most harvestable forest areas. Agriculture, along with mining, construction, over-fishing, organic pollution, dynamite fishing, and siltation caused by deforestation all place Savai'i's corals under stress. Upolu faces similar environmental threats from deforestation and over-fishing, whereas American Samoa has similar environmental challenges with over-fishing and deforestation, but for different reasons. Rapid modernization and a population that is growing faster than the lands can support it put major pressure on Tutuila's environment.



Students from the SEEDS Club at ASCC enjoy the natural wonders of Savai'i during their research trip last week. The Club spent five days observing the environment and analyzing factors that affect it. *(Courtesy Photo)*

Fortunately, the last few years have seen a concerted effort made to develop eco-friendly industries and conserve the beauty and biological diversity of the rain forests that cover the Samoan islands. Support for the conservation of Savai'i's fragile ecosystem comes from government and non-profit organizations. An indigenous conservation organization, Fa'asao Savai'i, established by Chief Va'asilifiti Moelagi Jackson, is working to establish nature preserves in rainforests and coral reefs. Upolu has several conservation areas, such as Palolo Deep Marine Reserve, Uafato Conservation Area, The Saanapu and Sataoa Mangrove Conservation Area, O Le Pupu-Pue National Park, and the Togitogiga Scenic Reserve. In American Samoa, the 10,000 acre makes a major contribution to the ecological health of the region. In keeping with the meaning of the word Samoa - "sacred earth" - the

National Park of American Samoa helps protect fa'asamoa, the customs, beliefs, and traditions of the 3,000 year-old Samoan culture.

ASCC Marine Sciences instructor and SEEDS Club advisor Carolyn Braun also credits agencies like The Fisheries Extension Program, as well as Community Fisheries Management Program of the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources for their efforts to keep Samoa's ocean environment healthy. "Conserving our land and sea resources requires a number of separate but related programs," she said, "and I think the SEEDS Club now understands the scope of the work involved."

Having seen many highlights of Samoa's natural environment during the Savai'i journey, Natural Resource major Sina Ve'a reflected, "This trip was not only about learning how we as a people interact with the environment, but also how we interact as a society and a culture."